

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

ENDC/PV.226
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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 24 August 1965, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. Z. CERNIK

(Czechoslovakia)

65-22388

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. A. CORREA do LAGO
Mr. D. SILVEIRA da MOTA

Bulgaria:

Mr. C. LUKANOV
Mr. Y. GOLEMANOV
Mr. T. DAMIANOV
Mr. G. YANKOV

Burma:

U SAIN BWA
U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS
Mr. J.A. BEESLEY
Mr. C.J. MARSHALL
Mr. P.D. LEE

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. Z. CERNIK
Mr. V. VAJNAR
Mr. R. KLEIN
Mr. F. DOBIAS

Ethiopia:

Mr. A. ZELLEKE
Mr. T. BEKELE

India:

Mr. V.C. TRIVEDI
Mr. K.P. LUKOSE

Italy:

Mr. F. CAVALLETTI
Mr. E. GUIDOTTI
Mr. S. AVETTA
Mr. G.P. TOZZOLI

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

<u>Mexico:</u>	Mr. A. GOMEZ ROBLEDO
<u>Nigeria:</u>	Mr. L.C.N.OBI Mr. O.O. ADESOLA
<u>Poland:</u>	Mr. J. GOLDBLAT Mr. E. STANIEWSKI Mr. A. SKOWRONSKI
<u>Romania:</u>	Mr. V. DUMITRESCU Mr. E. GLASER Mr. C. UNGUREANU Mr. P. MATEESCU
<u>Sweden:</u>	Mr. P. LIND Mr. P. HAMMARSKJOLD Mr. B. VEGESACK Mr. U. ERICSSON
<u>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:</u>	Mr. S.K. TSARAPKIN Mr. Y.M. VORONTSOV Mr. S.A. BOGOMOLOV
<u>United Arab Republic:</u>	Mr. A.F. HASSAN Mr. A. OSMAN Mr. M. KASSEM Mr. S. IBRAHIM
<u>United Kingdom:</u>	Lord CHALFONT Sir Harold BEELEY Mr. P.W.J. BUXTON Miss E.J.M. RICHARDSON

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

United States of America:

Mr. W.C. FOSTER

Mr. A. AKALOVSKY

Mr. D.S. MACDONALD

Mr. W.A. HAYNE

Special Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

The CHAIRMAN (Czechoslovakia) (translation from Russian): I call the two hundred and twenty-sixth plenary meeting of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to order.

Mr. BURNS (Canada): Today I am going to speak about the draft treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons (ENDC/152) which was tabled on 17 August by the representative of the United States, and also about certain views expressed by some of the other delegations with regard to dissemination and the need for a treaty to prevent it.

The delegations of the North Atlantic Treaty nations here support the draft which is before the Committee. It is a joint product of the four of us, as Mr. Foster has told the Conference (ENDC/PV.224, p. 17). It represents the general form of a treaty which we should be ready to sign. We recognize, of course, that there may be features in this draft of which other nations represented here may not approve, or may wish to see modified. We shall -- and I think I can speak for all the North Atlantic States here on this -- be ready to consider any amendments which may be suggested which will make the treaty generally more acceptable, as long as they do not affect its central purpose or impair its effectiveness in achieving what is desired -- that is, to arrest the spread of nuclear weapons. What is meant by this phrase? As we see it, the problem is to get other nations to agree not to arm themselves with nuclear weapons which they may use at their sovereign pleasure.

Let me now refer to the views expressed by the non-aligned nations with regard to a treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. There is one point common to the positions indicated by the representatives of Sweden (ENDC/PV.222, pp.13 et seq.), the United Arab Republic (ENDC/PV.224, pp. 10 et seq.), Brazil (ibid., pp.14 et seq.) and Mexico (ibid., pp.30 et seq.). It is that the non-nuclear nations they represent firmly believe that non-proliferation, if it is to be accepted as a principle and is to be enshrined in a treaty, must eventually be supplemented by collateral measures by the nuclear Powers to put a stop to the increase of their nuclear weaponry and to commence reducing it.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

This viewpoint is perfectly understood by the Canadian delegation. Since we began working over ideas on what a draft treaty should contain, we have been convinced that it cannot be a one-sided bargain if it is to be effective and if it is to last. We would agree with the view expressed by the representative of the United Arab Republic, who said that a non-dissemination treaty should be not --

"... a mere instrument in which the non-nuclear Powers would gladly renounce their rights to acquire nuclear weapons in order just to perpetuate the monopoly or the privileged position of the present five nuclear Powers:"

but --

"... an important measure to curb and to reverse the nuclear arms race in order to facilitate the actual reduction and final destruction of the existing stocks of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery."

(ibid., p. 11)

The representative of Brazil took an essentially similar position, saying:

"Of course, we believe that such formulae should not regard non-dissemination as an end in itself but should take into account also the effective security of the non-nuclear Powers." (ibid., p. 14)

He went on to say:

"While it is necessary to put a stop to any increase in the membership of the nuclear club, the nuclear Powers themselves should undertake to reduce their atomic arsenal, and the non-proliferation measures proposed should take into account the needs of the developing countries in regard to economic and social progress." (ibid.)

The views of the representative of Mexico were very much the same. He said:

"The resolution of the Disarmament Commission under which we have convened here does not restrict the concept of proliferation to the first of these two aspects;" --

that is extraspacial as opposed to intraspacial proliferation --

"consequently the facts force us to take both aspects into account. Therefore, in an ideal, or simply adequate, treaty on non-dissemination, it will be necessary to prohibit not only outside proliferation, that is beyond political frontiers, but also, and with the same energy, internal proliferation, first by freezing and then reducing the manufacture of fissionable material for warlike purposes." (ibid., p. 31)

The representative of Sweden said:

"For my country the belief in the necessity to reduce already-existing nuclear capabilities, or at least to stifle their growth in strength, amounts to a fundamental principle ..." (ENDC/PV.222, p. 16).

Mrs. Myrdal referred briefly to the Swedish proposal made during the nineteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly for a three-pronged package -- non-dissemination, comprehensive test ban, and cut-off of production of fissionable material (A/PV.1319, p. 27). She stressed that --

"... any offer of reduction of the nuclear strength of the present nuclear Powers, would serve as an inducement to the non-nuclear ones to forgo temptations to enter the nuclear race." (ENDC/PV.222, p. 19)

The representative of India took a more extreme position. He said:

"A non-proliferation agreement, therefore, is basically an agreement to be entered into by the nuclear Powers not to proliferate nuclear weapons. Other provisions are consequential and subsidiary. A prohibition to proliferate applies first to those who are in a position to proliferate or reproduce nuclear weapons themselves, and only secondarily to those who may subsequently be in such a position.

"No international treaty can, therefore, be acceptable which issues dictates only to non-nuclear countries not to do this or that, particularly when the countries possessing nuclear weapons do not assume any prior commitments themselves." (ENDC/PV.223, p. 15)

The representative of India therefore thought that the existing nuclear Powers should agree, in a treaty, to stop increasing their stocks and start reducing them. After that, perhaps, the non-nuclear Powers might be expected to adhere to a treaty under which they would agree not to become nuclear Powers -- that is, not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons and the means of delivering them which they could use at their sovereign discretion without the advice or consent of any other Power (ibid., p. 18).

As I have said, Canada considers that if there is to be an enduring agreement to limit the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries, then the nuclear Powers must stop increasing their stocks of nuclear weapons and begin to reduce them.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

But it is wise to insist that the nuclear Powers must start doing this before -- I repeat, before -- any other measures to halt the arms race and reduce nuclear armaments can be carried out? We were impressed by the analogy used by the representative of Mexico, who said:

"Just as the control of epidemics usually starts by isolating the source of infection before attacking the disease at its roots ..."

(ENDC/PV.224, p. 31)

Another analogy might be, how should one fight a great fire that has broken out in a city and threatens to destroy it? The fire must be put out -- or burn out -- in the buildings where it is burning fiercely; but the greatest concern of the fire-fighters is usually to prevent the fire from spreading to the rest of the city.

In the view of the Canadian delegation, article VI paragraph 2 of the United States draft, providing for the possibility of a review after a certain period of time, should go some way towards meeting the concern of non-nuclear nations that their abstention from nuclear arming will produce some nuclear disarmament by the nuclear Powers. The proposal put forward by the Foreign Minister of Italy, Signor Fanfani, for a limited-term moratorium (ENDC/PV.219, pp. 18, 19) was, we believe, based on similar considerations. A review such as that suggested in article VI of the draft treaty would of course take into account what progress had been made towards dealing with the question of nuclear weapons. However, the Canadian delegation does not believe it to be necessary to insist upon prior steps by the nuclear Powers before the final text of a generally-acceptable non-proliferation agreement can be worked out.

Representatives will recall that a number of proposals are before the Committee for collateral measures to deal with the question of nuclear armaments. At the opening meeting of our present session Mr. Foster, the representative of the United States, renewed (ENDC/PV.218, p. 13) his country's proposal (ENDC/120) -- which has been before us for a long time -- to halt the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes, and to start making a reduction in the stocks held by the two major nuclear Powers. He also renewed President Johnson's offer, made at the beginning of our session in 1964, "to halt further increases in strategic armaments now", which President Johnson believed "... will open the path to reductions in all types of forces from present levels." (ibid.)

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

Lord Chalfont, the representative of the United Kingdom, brought us a message from Mr. Wilson, the British Prime Minister, in which he said:

"I hope also to see progress made towards the adoption of President Johnson's imaginative and far-seeing proposal for a freeze of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles. The British Government believe it urgent to consider the limitation and, if possible, the reduction of existing nuclear armouries, without destroying or upsetting the present overall military balance."

(ENDC/PV.219, p. 7)

Lord Chalfont later said:

"We believe, to put it more plainly, that much of the great nuclear armoury that has been built up in the East and the West could be destroyed without putting at risk the safety or the peace of mind of either side. That belief is based not upon faith or hope, but upon close and extensive studies upon which we in Britain have been engaged during the past months."

(ibid., p.8)

Those, the Canadian delegation feels, are encouraging words.

The Soviet Union has also put forward proposals in this general area: for example, point 7 of its programme of collateral measures presented to the General Assembly of the United Nations on 7 December 1964 (A/5827 and Corr.1). This calls for the destruction of bombers and is a variation of what was popularly called the "bomber bonfire" proposal. Although the Soviet representative has at this session said nothing about this point and has again rejected both of the United States proposals to which I have just referred, the Canadian delegation hopes that the Soviet Union will eventually come to realize that the path towards halting the arms race and reducing nuclear armaments, and so reducing and finally eliminating the danger of nuclear war by general and complete disarmament, lies in negotiating such measures as those I have just mentioned, including the bomber elimination plan -- perhaps expanded to include some intermediate-range and intercontinental missiles.

I am sure that all members of this Committee will agree that any agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union on the limitation and reduction of nuclear armaments would reduce the danger of nuclear war. I believe it not too much to say that without the consent of one or other of these two great Powers there is no possibility of nuclear war in the world of today. Therefore any

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

agreement between them which would signify a halt or even a slowing-down of the arms race would be of the greatest encouragement to everyone in the world who hopes for an end to the piling-up of nuclear armaments and for a more secure future. I commend to the representative of the Soviet Union the proverb quoted by the representative of Mexico: "... the good is often the enemy of the best...". (ENDC/PV.224, p.31) Mr. Robledo went on to say: "... one has to start with something practicable, even if it is not the best, before tackling work of wider scope." (ibid.) How reasonable, and how right!

But what are we to do here and now? Many of the speakers who have preceded me have pointed out the clear directions of the United Nations Disarmament Commission to --

"... accord special priority to the consideration of the question of a treaty or convention to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons giving close attention to the various suggestions that agreement could be facilitated by adopting a programme of certain related measures;"

(DC/225, ENDC/149)

The Canadian delegation would hope that all delegations here could agree that in the present circumstances the most useful course that this Committee could take would be to concentrate its efforts on working out terms of a treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. In particular, the Canadian delegation hopes that all delegations will examine carefully the draft treaty (ENDC/152) which we have before us, and offer their comments and suggestions for its improvement.

The Canadian delegation hopes that the Soviet delegation and the delegations of the other East-European countries will join in the discussion for the improvement of this draft treaty. We are very well aware of their principal concern in regard to non-dissemination -- that there should be no dissemination of nuclear weapons to the non-nuclear nations of the NATO alliance. But we think that this very important question -- this important concern of the Soviet Union and its allies -- is not going to be settled by deciding on a particular form of words in articles I and II of the treaty, or any corresponding articles that may be devised. We think it will have to be settled by negotiation between the nuclear Powers represented here; but we hope that, while waiting for this settlement by negotiation, and making any necessary reservations in this regard,

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

the representatives of the members of the Warsaw Pact will join in developing a treaty which they could recommend for adoption by all nations. Their eventual agreement, we understand, will depend on the question of nuclear armament within the NATO alliance being solved in such a way as not to constitute an increased danger to their security.

I should like now to say a few words about the provisions for the application of International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards set down in article III of the United States draft treaty. Canada attaches much importance to including in the treaty practical measures of control that is, verification of the compliance of the parties with their obligations. The acceptance of obligation to place peaceful atomic activities under IAEA safeguards seemed to us to be one of the most feasible methods of doing this. These safeguards have been accepted by many countries: the IAEA is a truly international organization on which a large number of countries are represented. We here who have been negotiating disarmament are all agreed in principle that control over measures of disarmament -- and certain measures leading to disarmament -- should whenever possible be international. We understand also that the Soviet Union favours the principle of IAEA controls over atomic installations for peaceful purposes.

We agree with those who have stated that controls over atomic installations for peaceful purposes should be accepted by nuclear Powers as well as non-nuclear States; and article III of the draft treaty is phrased in such a way as not to discriminate between nuclear and non-nuclear States. The Canadian delegation would have preferred to see this article put in stronger terms; but it was left in its present form in deference to the expressed views of certain countries. At the same time, we were unable to see why or how the acceptance of IAEA safeguards would in any way hinder developing countries in installing atomic power plants or other installations for peaceful purposes. We think that, as Lord Chalfont remarked, a country which is developing atomic power for peaceful purposes would be reassured to know that its neighbours, and more distant countries, were equally peaceful in their intentions in developing atomic power.

Canada's long-standing decision not to manufacture nuclear weapons will undoubtedly be familiar to members of this body. Recently the Canadian Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Lester Pearson, outlined to the House of Commons Canadian policy regarding the export of uranium. I quote from his statement to the House on 3 June 1965:

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

"As one part of its policy to promote the use of Canadian uranium for peaceful purposes the Government has decided that export permits will be granted, or commitments to issue export permits will be given, with respect to sales of uranium covered by contracts entered into from now on, only if the uranium is to be used for peaceful purposes. Before such sales to any destination are authorized, the Government will require an agreement with the government of the importing country to ensure, with appropriate verification and control, that the uranium is to be used for peaceful purposes only.

"Canada has been a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency since its inception and successive governments have vigorously supported the principle of safeguards on uranium sales. This policy is a fundamental part of Canada's general policy to work internationally to avoid the proliferation of nuclear weapons."

(Canada: House of Commons Debates, Vol. 110, No. 35, pp. 1948,9)

In answer to a question raised on 4 June this year regarding the possible use by Canada of some of our uranium to manufacture our own nuclear arms in the future, the Prime Minister said:

"It is certainly not our intention to manufacture nuclear arms in any way, shape or form. It is the purpose of this policy to prevent the proliferation of nuclear arms in the world."

(ibid., No. 36, p. 1981)

So far, I have been speaking about the application of safeguards to the peaceful nuclear programmes of States. Inspection of the military nuclear programmes of nuclear Powers clearly involves rather different considerations. In this context, inspection would be contingent upon agreement by the military nuclear Powers to proposals such as the cut-off and transfer of fissionable material and the freeze of strategic nuclear weapon vehicles. Until such time as agreement is reached on these or similar proposals and suitable arrangements for inspection can be worked out, it seems pointless to contemplate extending the IAEA safeguards system to military programmes, for which it was never intended and which the IAEA, under its statute, would not be able to carry out.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

There is another kind of control -- perhaps "remote control" -- to assure parties that others are complying with their obligations. This is the provision of article VI, paragraph 1, of the draft treaty (ENDC/152) regarding withdrawal. The effect of the requirement that a country contemplating withdrawal should state its case to the Security Council would mean that the circumstances would be brought out into the open. These circumstances would surely be such as would affect international peace and security. Withdrawal from a treaty such as this would be, if it had been acceded to by the majority of States in the world, as we hope it would be, would indeed be a serious matter requiring action by the Security Council, which could act to clear up any misunderstandings by a thorough investigation, if that should be found necessary. The Security Council might even take other decisive action to prevent the upsetting or degradation of a treaty which would be a very important bulwark for world peace, and against the possibility of nuclear war.

Of course, the provisions for a review of the treaty, in the second paragraph of article VI, would allow a majority of the parties to withdraw from their commitments after the period stated in the eventual text if it appeared that the treaty was ineffective, if no steps towards nuclear disarmament had been taken by the nuclear Powers, and if the treaty was not protecting their security and lessening the danger of the outbreak of a nuclear war.

In this statement I have not referred to the first measure to which resolution DC/225 of the United Nations Disarmament Commission required us to give priority: that is, the extension of the partial ban on nuclear testing to include underground tests. This is not because Canada in any way undervalues the importance of such a measure. We hope to speak at some length on this at a later meeting. For today, however, it seemed better to confine our remarks to certain of the considerations relating to the draft treaty on preventing the spread of nuclear weapons which the Committee has before it.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 226th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of Mr. Cernik, representative of Czechoslovakia.

"A statement was made by the representative of Canada.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 26 August 1965, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.

